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# Informer Ties Top Mexican To Drug Deals

## Allegations Revealed In DEA Affidavit

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An affidavit submitted by the Drug Enforcement Administration and alleging that Mexico's defense secretary, Gen. Juan Arevalo Gardoqui, took payoffs from drug traffickers was denounced by Mexican officials yesterday.

The allegations—based on four-year-old charges by an informer—link Arevalo to a major marijuana-smuggling organization formerly headed by Rafael Caro Quintero, a flamboyant trafficker charged in the 1985 murder of DEA agent Enrique Camarena.

The DEA affidavit filed in federal court in Tucson this week quotes the unnamed informer—described only as a former Mexican government official—as reporting that Caro Quintero “paid 10 million United States dollars” to Arevalo for protection of a huge marijuana and poppy plantation used by Caro Quintero in the state of Chihuahua in 1984. The affidavit also quotes the informer as saying that a videotape of the payoff was allegedly made by a member of Caro Quintero's organization.

Top DEA officials emphasized yesterday they are not investigating Arevalo, adding that the allegations were four years old and they had no independent information to substantiate them. “I didn't get terribly excited about them,” said DEA Administrator John C. Lawn. “This information has not been of sufficient concern to initiate an investigation.”

Numerous members of the Mexican military and the country's Federal Judicial Police have been accused of ties to the drug trade in the past. But U.S. officials say privately that, as with the latest charges against Arevalo, there is little direct evidence against most senior Mexican officials, who are usually well shielded from involvement by subordinates.

Nevertheless, Mexican officials were infuriated over the charges, issuing angry denunciations and demanding to see the U.S. government's evidence. A State Depart-



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Mexican Defense Secretary Gen. Arevalo demands to see evidence on charges.

ment official, noting the extreme sensitivity with which Mexico views the drug issue, said yesterday that a formal diplomatic note protesting the affidavit is likely in the next few days.

“This is not the first time that delinquents in custody in the United States have made slanderous, defamatory accusations against Mexican authorities without proof to back it up,” the Mexican attorney general's office said in a statement.

A Mexican defense spokesman termed the charge “groundless” and said Arevalo had demanded to see the evidence on which it was based.

“The defense secretary has denied this slander and has requested the attorney general's office to ask United States authorities for whatever proof that they say they have,” Lt. Salvador Macias Cabrera said yesterday.

The flap over Arevalo grew out of the May 26 arrest in Scottsdale, Ariz., of Jaime Javier Figueroa-Sota, a wealthy Mexican cattle rancher and former associate of Caro Quintero who is alleged to have developed one of the largest marijuana smuggling organizations in the southwest United States. In the past week, DEA and local police have arrested 10 others, including two former policeman in the Mexican state of Sonora wanted in connection with a 1986 double homicide.

In addition, DEA has seized about \$10 million in assets belonging to Figueroa-Sota's organization, including about \$6.7 million in bank accounts, 40 vehicles, five AK47 automatic rifles, seven houses and 100 pounds of marijuana and cocaine.

The affidavit—aimed at supporting the government's seizure of Figueroa-Sota's assets—lays out a broad criminal conspiracy involving Figueroa-Sota dating back to the 1970s. In the passages relating to Arevalo, the affidavit notes that on Nov. 26, 1984, Mexican officials raided a plantation used by Caro Quintero and Figueroa-Sota and destroyed 10,000 tons of marijuana.

Since Caro Quintero had allegedly paid Arevalo for protection of the plantation, the traffickers were upset, according to the affidavit. “The main traffickers associated in this venture . . . plan to regroup and will take revenge by killing several people including Gen. Arevalo Gardoqui or members of his family,” the affidavit quotes the informer as saying.

The portions of the affidavit relating to Arevalo were taken directly from an internal DEA report prepared by a DEA agent in Mexico City in November 1984, according to Leonard H. Williams, resident agent-in-charge of the DEA's Tucson office who supervised the preparation of the affidavit.

The affidavit also includes allegations from other informers that bribes were paid to an Immigration and Naturalization Service inspector who allowed trailer loads of marijuana to cross the border. Williams said the agency is still investigating the involvement of the inspector and any other U.S. government officials who were tied to Figueroa-Sota's organization.

*Special correspondent William Orme in Mexico City contributed to this report.*

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